

RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S

Ably Defended by Major Robert Stiles.

HIS LETTER TO MR. TIBBITS

And His General Attitude Towards the Moody Meetings

ARE HERE VERY FULLY EXPLAINED.

Maj. Stiles Says "I Absolutely Know and Unqualifiedly Assert that Dr. Carmichael is not Opposed to the Young Men's Christian Association."

To the Editor of The Times: I am not unmindful of the responsibility assumed by the man who pens or utters an additional word touching the lamentable misunderstanding between Dr. Carmichael and the Y. M. C. A. about the Moody meetings. Nor am I indifferent to the unfavorable comment which this letter may call forth from true friends of mine, wiser, perhaps than I. But, after all, one is ultimately to be controlled by his own sense of right. This he must follow and obey. If he would maintain his birthright as a moral and responsible being.

WHY APPROPRIATE THAT MAJOR STILES BE HEARD?

And, if any one should be further heard in the premises, there are perhaps special reasons rendering it not inappropriate for me to speak. My purpose in writing this letter is too deep and fervent, and has been too much mingled with prayer, to admit even a conscious temptation to magnify or exalt myself, in enumerating these reasons.

For much the larger part of my life a Presbyterian, in these later years providentially transferred to the Episcopal Church and I gratefully add, quite at home and very happy there, I have all life long been blessed by wide acquaintance and co-operation with Christian ministers and people of all denominations, and I may mention with humble thankfulness, that I have been called upon to address Sabbath-school children and adult congregations in almost every church in this good city, during the last quarter of a century.

I am certainly a friend of the Young Men's Christian Association; am a life member of the association of this city; have had the honor of being its president, and once had the pleasure, in connection with two other gentlemen, of opening its closed doors by paying the rent in arrear, for which its furniture and equipment had been seized under legal process.

I certainly love the dear Brotherhood of St. Andrew, and, in the providence of God, in rather a peculiar sense, have stood sponsor for it throughout Virginia. I greatly admire and esteem Mr. Moody, having last summer enjoyed the rare privilege of close approach to him, of seeing and hearing him at his best—in his wondrous summer school at Northfield.

And I admire and love Dr. Carmichael; there is no sort of doubt as to that. There are few men whom I care and admire as much, and fewer still to whom I owe as much, who mean as much to me; for I do not hesitate to declare that, so far as I am able to trace the growth of my own soul and the sources of that growth, no other human soul, outside the circle of my own family, has so built me up in the knowledge and the love of God's word, his work, his church—as this young foreigner. Under his teaching I learned for the first time the fuller meaning of that rich apostolic word, "edification."

And, last of all, it so happens that not only am I well acquainted with the gentlemen whom my rector and friend has most uncomfortably antagonized, not only do I esteem them highly as Christian brethren, but I have been and hope yet to be very closely associated with some of them in Christian work, and I would not willingly utter one word which would not hurt one of them.

IN WHAT DR. CARMICHAEL HAS BEEN CRITICIZED.

So far as I know, there are three several grounds upon which my friend has been severely criticized.

First. The spirit and tone of his published letters.

Dr. Carmichael is a most independent person, a man who follows unwaveringly his own ideas and standards of right. In the particular above referred to, his and mine would probably not coincide.

To me, his letters are not, in tone at least, what I wish they were; but I do not believe their tone was inspired by temper; certainly I have seen in another other indication of temper in connection with these matters. He is an Englishman, and like his race, is wanting in tact, blunt and outspoken. We Americans are often repelled by their bluntness, and they by our softness and smoothness, savoring to them of insincerity. If somewhat of their candor could be combined with some of our courtesy, both peoples would be gainers.

Second. Antagonism to the Y. M. C. A. and to Mr. Moody and his work, as shown in his letters and sermons and his general attitude during the recent revival meetings.

Let me say just here that, in stating Dr. Carmichael's position, I am not stating his formal statement of it. The character of this letter should be the alternative demonstration that Dr. Carmichael is in no way connected with the preparation of it, and that I am giving only the results of general and deputative conversations with my pastor, who, if this letter ever sees the light, will be as much surprised at its character and scope as any man in the city.

I absolutely know, then, and unequivocally assert, that Dr. Carmichael is not opposed to the Young Men's Christian Association or to Mr. Moody; but, on the contrary, he entertains a high estimate of them both and a kindly feeling toward both.

He simply does not believe, to the extent that most of us do, in the permanent benefit and value of revival services of the kind, those recently held in the city, and he does not believe in the propriety and prudence of such services, being inspired, controlled and directed to the extent which he thinks these services were by the Young Men's Christian Association.

In these two propositions are embodied the sum and substance, the beginning and the end, of his real difference with the mass of the Christian people of Richmond. Please do not, for the present, proceed to question or discuss even in your own mind, the extent to which the recent revival meetings here were suggested, controlled, directed by the Young Men's Christian Association. We may come to this by-and-bye.

I say Dr. Carmichael believes in and admires Mr. Moody as a truly consecrated and powerful servant of God, who in many ways has done and is doing an immense work for good in this world. And he believes in the Y. M. C. A., and values it highly, when kept to its appropriate work and within its appropriate limits. He may not agree with some of us as to these limits.

For instance, he does not agree with the utterance of Dr. Calisch, the noted rabbi of one of our synagogues, who, as I am informed, in his manly, high-souled, broad-minded speech at the first of the recent meetings in the Chamber of Com-

merce, termed the Y. M. C. A. "The Young Men's Church."

This is exactly what Dr. Carmichael fears the Y. M. C. A. is in danger of becoming, and exactly what he thinks it should not become. In one of these positions, at least, most of us agree with him. He feels that the religious services of the Y. M. C. A., the religious side of its operation, if I may so express it, should be, in a larger degree than it is, under the direction of the ministry and the Church of Christ. I have heard him say this was the constitution or the practical operation of the association in Ireland, and he believes it to be safer and the sounder way. But, as I have before said, he believes in the Y. M. C. A., and he loves it.

He expressed to me the other day, in the most natural manner, his joy in the success of the meetings to liquidate the debt upon the building; and, while he did not say so directly, I am satisfied he would have sent a personal contribution if he had not thought such action on his part just now would savour of sensationalism or truckling, which are equally foreign to the nature of the man.

In his letters and his unfortunate sermon, doubly unfortunate in being partly extemporaneous, Dr. Carmichael intended merely to repudiate responsibility for the ultimate results of religious work which had been upon lines which he did not approve, and did not regard as giving fair promise of good and permanent results. He understood his "circular" as assuming to fix such responsibility upon him, and I think he had good reason for this construction of it. These circulars mentioned cards "signed" by him.

Take the question of the "invitation," the "invitations," under which Mr. Moody came. Dr. Carmichael says the Young Men's Christian Association brought him here. Dr. Hatcher says the ministers brought him, but the others say it was Dr. Carmichael who admitted that the Young Men's Christian Association first sent a committee for Mr. Moody, and, finding he would only come upon the invitation of the ministers of Richmond, the Young Men's Christian Association immediately set to work to procure the invitation to be sent him by the ministers. This, I think, no one will deny. Possibly, too, the Young Men's Christian Association, not being able to assume financial responsibility for the meetings, and being unable to pay the expenses of the "circulars," did not know that all these brethren have made or shall make, and, rather than accuse them of intentional prevarication, to admit that he may have misunderstood statements made by them.

But all this does not affect the question whether or not Dr. Carmichael is nearer right than his Christian brethren on this question, whether the persons who were young and inexperienced are less thoughtful Christian minister should question the wisdom, and feel cautious and doubtful as to the results of the methods pursued? I do not care to make public my own experience in following up these "cards"; but that, printed blanks were "filled in" with names and residences, every card sent to Dr. Carmichael being thus filled in in the same manner.

When it is recited that that thoughtful Christian minister should question the wisdom, and feel cautious and doubtful as to the results of the methods pursued? I do not care to make public my own experience in following up these "cards"; but that, printed blanks were "filled in" with names and residences, every card sent to Dr. Carmichael being thus filled in in the same manner.

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As to the liquidation of the debt being the inspiration of the thought of sending for Mr. Moody, Dr. Hatcher seems to deny everything beyond this meagre admission. "It is true that the Young Men's Christian Association did have a desire and even hope that Mr. Moody might use his great power in assisting them to roll off the great burden of their great debt." But the following facts, that can not and will not be disputed, stand under and support the broader and stronger statement of Dr. Carmichael.

Some time before Mr. Moody came, the president of the Young Men's Christian Association brought Mr. Moody to him, and the original purpose which inspired him suggested the thought of sending for him as to raise the debt of the association, and that the association is practically and properly responsible for his work here.

The more emphatic expression of Dr. Carmichael's views upon this point occurs in a paragraph of his letter to Mr. Arthur published in the Dispatch of April 17th, and is as follows:

"WHY MR. MOODY CAME."

"You say that the Young Men's Christian Association had nothing to say to the matter about which you write. I know to the contrary. I have filed their circular about souls, to show any who doubts in the matter, that we doubt in the matter. The Young Men's Christian Association brought Mr. Moody here. They asked him to come for the purpose of raising their debt; not a very spiritual purpose. He refused to run about raising debts. He then came with the understanding that, at the end of the meetings, he would see what could be done about raising the debt. He is here purely under the auspices of the Young Men's Christian Association, and they, not the churches, are responsible for the work, whether it stands or falls.

I am not, when I am talking about, I have the whole facts from the public statement made at a clerical meeting by the president and the secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association."

Third. Dr. Carmichael is criticised for asserting that the Young Men's Christian Association brought Mr. Moody to Richmond, and the original purpose which inspired him suggested the thought of sending for him as to raise the debt of the association, and that the association is practically and properly responsible for his work here.

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